

Illinois Congressmen Bobby Rush and Danny Davis today endorsed a proposal to build a third Chicago airport in the south suburbs through an innovative public-private partnership, a plan recently unveiled by Congressman Jesse L. Jackson Jr.

"For the first time ever, we have a realistic plan for building and financing an airport. We have at least two companies eager to invest up to \$400 million to build an airport in the Southland -- with no public funds and no public risk," Rush said. "This will create 1,000 construction jobs and 15,000 permanent new jobs in an area that badly needs them," added Rush, who represents the South Side and southwest suburbs.

Congressman Davis supports the plan because it creates jobs for Illinois residents -- without posing a threat to O'Hare or Midway.

"This modest one-runway, five-gate airport will complement -- not compete with -- O'Hare and Midway. The Third Airport will provide a new port-of-entry for cargo and low-cost airlines who want access to Chicago but cannot get into our two overcrowded airports," Davis said. "Two of the fastest segments of aviation are cargo and low-cost carriers. But O'Hare is not a low-cost airport and Midway is nearing capacity. If Chicago wants to capture this growing market and maintain its role as the nation's aviation hub, it will need a third airport."

Davis and Rush pointed out this proposal would repay the State of Illinois \$75 million for the land it has acquired in Will County, and noted that the Third Airport "is viable and necessary even with O'Hare expansion."

The congressmen added that the investment comes with no hidden costs and with no generous tax incentives, such as those given to lure other corporations to Chicago.

"This multi-million private investment will create jobs where needed; expand aviation capacity as needed; and serve as a new business magnet for Illinois," Rush said.